

WRITING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

One of the keys to successful grant writing is the proper expression of goals and objectives. Although some people use the terms interchangeably, they actually denote separate and distinct concepts. The difference is simple but important.

Definitions:

goal

noun

an aim or purpose:

Our goal is for the country to be fully independent.

objective

noun

something which you plan to do or achieve:

Our first objective is to hold free elections within 12 months.

(from [Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary](#))

- **Goals** represent broad statements of the desired outcome, accomplishment or ultimate achievement. They use general terms and cannot be measured. It may be useful to think of a goal as an **end**.

Students will enhance their appreciation and knowledge of classical music.

- **Objectives** describe the specific measures used to determine whether the goal has been achieved. They use precise language and can be measured. Objectives may be thought of as the **means** to the end.

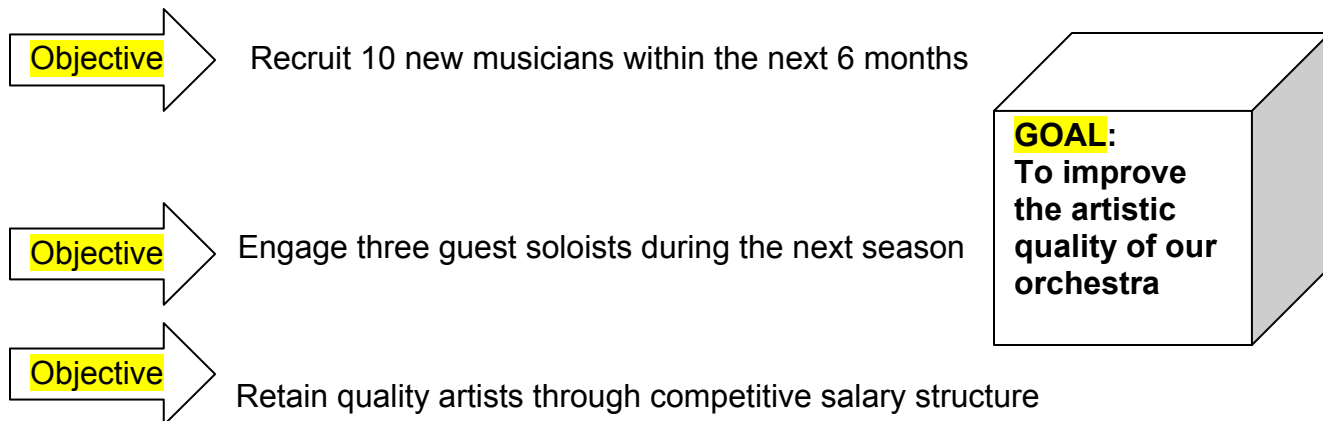
By the end of the semester, students will be able to identify four classical composers and recognize one major work by each one.

Your goals should reflect the mission of your organization, as set forth in your mission statement. Keep this in mind as you draft your goals – and take your time when you do. Your goals – and how you plan to meet them- may be what makes your grant application stand out from all the others.

- State your goals in positive outcome-oriented terms that are consistent with your organization's mission statement.
- Do not use figures, time-frames or other quantifiable elements in your goal statements – save them for the objectives.

Your objectives, on the other hand, should detail the steps you expect to take in order to achieve the goal. This is where the “who, what, when, where and how” elements fit in.

- Use precise numbers for time frames or quantities expected – eg. 35 *clients per month*, or *by February, 2006*.
- Incorporate achievement standards such as *accurately describe* or *fully complete*.



Your final task is to describe the activities that you plan to undertake in order to effectuate the objectives and reach your goal. The activities should not re-state the objectives, but instead, should tell the reader how the objectives will be carried out.

Using the example above, a sample activity for the first objective –recruiting new musicians- would be to place advertisements in four trade publications. The second objective –engaging guest soloists- could be accomplished by interviewing three violinists, three pianists and three lyric opera singers within the next 90 days. Finally, an activity designed to give effect to the last objective – retaining quality musicians- could be to evaluate and renegotiate the existing contract with an eye toward improving the benefits package.